

### REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-18 that are pending in the above identified Patent Application. Applicants have amended claims 1-18 to place them in better form. No narrowing amendments have been made and no new matter has been added.

In numbered part 1 of the Office Action, the Examiner objected to claims 3-18 due to several informalities. In response, Applicants have amended claims 1-18 to place them in better form for examination. Applicants submit that each of the Examiner's objections has been addressed by way of the claim amendments that have been made. Accordingly, Applicants submit that the Examiner's objections have been overcome.

In numbered parts 2 and 3 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 9-18 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. In response, Applicants have addressed the Examiner's antecedent basis rejections and clarity issues by amending claims 9 and 11. Accordingly, Applicants submit that the Examiner's rejection under § 112, second paragraph, is overcome and should be withdrawn.

In numbered parts 4 and 5 of the Office action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-7 and 11-15 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,374,302 ("the Galasso reference"). Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner's rejection.

The inventions as recited in independent claims 1, 6 and 11 of the instant application cover methods and apparatus that permit the completion of contact from one party to/from another party over one or more networks. For example, the contact may be a call from a calling

party to a called party. The calling party establishes a connection with an apparatus, such as a first server. Notably, this apparatus is capable of determining whether the call may be completed by the apparatus vis-à-vis the relative locations of the calling party and the called party. For example, if the calling party and the called party are in the same “community” served by the apparatus, then the apparatus may complete the call as between the two parties without resort to other apparatus serving other communities. On the other hand, if the calling party is in one community and the called party is in another community, then the apparatus serving the community of the calling party interacts with another apparatus serving the community of the called party.

In this regard, claim 1 is directed to an apparatus that includes “a stored table of information indicative a plurality of parties to be contacted and within a local community of interest, the stored table including a network address for each party within said local community of interest, and an indicator of which of at least two networks said address is a part... and a processor for determining if a request received is a request to contact a party that is within said local community of interest, and if so, completing the contact at the address and over the network stored in the table.”

In numbered part 5 of the Office Action, the Examiner takes the position that the Galasso reference discloses the claimed “stored table of information” by way of database 555 and database 565 of Fig. 3. The Examiner further alleges that the information within the databases 555, 565 of the Galasso reference are indicative of a plurality of parties to be contacted within the claimed “local community of interest”, citing zones 100 and 200 of Fig. 2. Assuming that one of the zones 100, 200 of the Galasso reference corresponds with the claimed “community of interest” of claim 1 of the instant application, however, the apparatus disclosed in the Galasso

reference associated with such zone is incapable of determining whether a request received by a party within the zone is for contacting a party that is also within the zone, and if so, completing the contact.

Indeed, as clearly established in the Galasso reference at column 4, lines 50-63; and column 7, lines 30-67, the gatekeeper of a given zone always contacts the associated action control point serving a plurality of zones in order to complete a call between two parties. For example, in column 4, the Galasso reference states “[w]hen a terminal in one zone 100 wants to communicate with a terminal in a different zone 200, the gatekeeper in the first zone 100 sends an address inquiry, including the terminal alias of the ‘called’ terminal, to the master gatekeeper 310. The customer database associates a terminal address with one or more terminal aliases for each terminal in each zone served by the action control point 300. When the master gatekeeper 310 receives the address inquiry, it uses the customer databases 320 to determine the terminal address associated with the terminal alias.” While the above quoted section of the Galasso reference is a discussion of Fig. 2, Fig. 3 is merely a scaled version of the system shown in Fig. 2. Thus, the apparatus within each of the zones 510, 520, etc. of Fig. 3 are not capable of determining whether a request from a party within the zone may be completed without first communicating with the action control point 550. This is precisely what the invention as recited in claim 1 seeks to avoid when the parties are in the same community.

Independent method claim 6 recites that a first server receives a request to complete a telephone call to a called party and “ascertaining, at said first server, if said first server is capable of completing the telephone call...” It is only when the call cannot be completed by the first server that the first server contacts “a second server to ascertain an identity of a third server that is capable of completing the telephone call...” Again, the Galasso reference fails to disclose or

suggest that the apparatus within a given zone (e.g., 510) makes any such determination prior to contacting the action control point associated therewith (i.e., 550).

Further, claim 6 recites that the third server “includes a stored table specifying whether said communications channel is to be formed over a data network or a telephone network.” Applicants submit that the Galasso reference is completely devoid of any such teaching. Indeed, none of the databases disclosed therein is described as specifying whether a communications channel between the third server and the called party is to be formed over a data network or a telephone network.

As with independent claims 1 and 6, independent claim 11 also contemplates functionality and/or actions within a given community that are neither disclosed or suggested by the Galasso. In particular, independent claim 11 recites “determining, from said identifier, whether said called party has a network address that is part of a community associated with said first server, and if so, completing the call by establishing a communications session between said first server and said called party...” It is only when the called party is not part of a community associated with said first server that a second server is contacted “to determine a third server having a community of which said called party is a part...” Thus, as has been established hereinabove, the Galasso reference fails to disclose or suggest the above quoted features of independent claim 11.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that the Galasso reference fails to disclose or suggest each and every feature recited in independent claims 1, 6, and 11 of the instant application. Accordingly, Applicants submit that the Examiner’s §102 (e) rejection thereof should be withdrawn. Further, claims 2-5, 7-10, and 12-18 depend from independent claims 1, 6, and 11, respectively, and contain all of the limitations thereof as well as other

limitations that are neither disclosed or suggested by the prior art of record. Accordingly, Applicants submit that the subject dependant claims are likewise patentable.

In numbered parts 6-7 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 8-10 and 16-18 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Galasso reference in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,587,867 ("the Miller reference"). Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner's rejection. As discussed in detail hereinabove, the Galasso reference is deficient in numerous ways to reject independent claims 1, 6, and 11. The Miller reference, however, fails to remedy these deficiencies. As claims 8-10 depend from independent claim 6 and claims 6-18 depend from independent claim 11, Applicants submit that the Examiner's §103 (a) rejection of such claims over the combination of the Galasso and Miller references should be withdrawn.

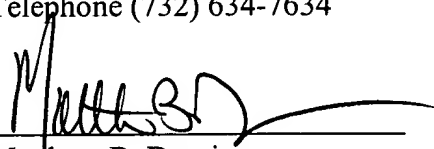
In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that the instant claims are in condition for allowance. Early and favorable action is earnestly solicited.

The Examiner is authorized to deduct any fees believed due from our Deposit Account No. 11-0223.

Respectfully submitted,

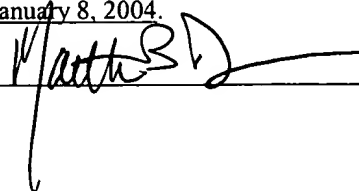
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## CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal service as first class mail, in a postage prepaid envelope, addressed to Mail Stop Non-Fee Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on January 8, 2004.

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